

## **National Forest Advisory Board (NFAB) Meeting**

November 17, 2010

Mystic Ranger District Office, Rapid City

### **Members Present:**

Jim Heinert, Chairman; Everett Hoyt, Bill Kohlbrand, Nels Smith, Craig Tieszen, Jeff Vonk, Sam Brannan, Tom Blair, Nancy Kile, Becci Jo Rowe, Jim Scherrer, Bob Paulson, Tom Troxel, Carson Engleskirger, Suzanne Martley, Terry Mayes

### **Forest Service Representatives:**

Craig Bobzien, Dennis Jaeger, Tina Lanier, Frank Carroll, Bob Thompson, Steve Kozel, Russ Graham, Terrie Jain, Marie Curtin, Twila Morris - Recorder.

### **Others:**

Approximately 10 members of the public and two Congressional representatives; Chris Blair (Johnson – D, South Dakota), Mark Haugen (Thune – R, South Dakota)

### **Members Absent:**

Donovin Sprague, Hugh Thompson, Pat McElgunn

### **Welcome:**

**Chair Heinert:** Quorum present, called the meeting to order at 12:59 p.m.

I'm sure I speak for the Board in saying that we appreciate the opportunity to serve, we feel a sense of accomplishment as we work with you to manage the Forest. This offers us an excellent opportunity to get involved.

### **Approve Minutes (September Meeting):**

**Heinert:** Do we have a motion to approve the minutes? Motion made by Craig Tieszen second by Becci Rowe, motion carried.

### **Approve the Agenda:**

**Heinert:** Are there any changes to the Agenda?

**Bobzien:** For context on our regular agenda, the intent of the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program (CFLRP) topic is that the proposal from the Subcommittee would be for approved. This is not just an update.

**Heinert:** Does everyone understand that the intent of the CFLRP topic is for Board approval? If so, do we have a motion to approve the agenda? Motion made by Jim Scherrer, second made by Carson Engleskirger, motion carried.

### **Housekeeping:**

**Carroll:** Explanation of facilities; treats thanks to the Boxelder Job Corps.

### **Meeting Protocols:**

**Heinert:** Reminder to members of the Board; we struggle from time to time in observing the conduct of a board meeting, we stray. The nature is such that it requires a certain level of formality, my job as the chairperson is to help facilitate and make sure that all members are heard, and able to ask their questions. A lot of us bring a lot of passion to the table; it's good to work with a group that has passion. All I would ask is that you please allow me to manage the meeting. Get my attention to make statements, and ask questions, in the long run the meeting will go better.

### **Comments to the Chair:**

**Bobzien:** I apologize, going back to the agenda; Terry Mayes will be here shortly to present the CFLRP topic. Also, on the first break, I would like to get an NFAB photograph.

## **Hot Topics**

### **Travel Plan Public Outreach**

**Bobzien:** As many of you are aware, we have been given a lot of ink lately about a lot of different subjects; one being our travel plan motor vehicle use map (MVUM). I sent an e-mail to all of you to let you know when the decision was made earlier this year, and will be effective December 1, 2010. Our focus this fall is to get out and educate groups that may not have been educated. The deer hunting group is one, a lot of them are from out of area, and some who may not have attended the meetings. We had a goal for our field presence, working with State Conservation Officers and others; our goal was to get 2,000 maps out in the field for deer hunters. To date, we've distributed around 5,000 to 6,000. We want to spread the word, gain the understanding and get support, it has been very favorable for the most part, and there has been some distress. We are moving forward, and I would like to get perspective from anyone on the Board who would like to share.

**Vonk:** I just want to thank Craig for deciding to implement in December and taking the time to do the outreach in November. It was a great decision. I think you made the right decision, and we are very pleased. The education effort has been well worthwhile.

**Carroll:** I spoke today with Kevin Woster of the Rapid City Journal; he is doing a follow up piece that will print just before implementation. Kevin will be calling members of this board in the next few days to get your thoughts.

### **Executive Office of the President, CEQ – Alternative Arrangements**

**Bobzien:** On September 21, 2010, Stephanie Herseth Sandlin sent a letter to the Chief requesting consideration for the Black Hills National Forest to be granted alternative arrangements for compliance with NEPA. Our Chiefs office is in consultation with the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) to enable us to have these alternative arrangements.

There were four flights of the beetle this year, so we are focused on doing some additional “sanitation” to remove the green hit trees, aimed at getting those trees removed, or cut and chunked out on the ground. The State has been doing that for some years. In areas where we don’t have the NEPA we would not be able to get it done quickly enough. There is no formal word from the Chiefs office at this time, but we know that it is being pursued. We just wanted to brief you on this as a hot topic; we’ll keep you informed on the Chiefs response.

**Blair:** We had four flights? Is that abnormal?

**Bobzien:** Yes that is abnormal – their last flight was the last week of October.

**Blair:** There’s been a variety of articles in the newspaper about bark beetles and communities climbing on board to help, will we discuss that?

**Bobzien:** Yes

**Engleskirger:** Could you clarify the four flights?

**Bobzien:** There were four waves of people out marking, and as they mark, they go back to the sites and see that the trees that were marked to leave had been hit by the bark beetle.

**Martley:** On the CEQ NEPA request; I am wondering whether this office or the Regional Office has talked with CEQ about tiering off an existing EIS of the Forest Plan or doing an EA since you’ve done the NEPA on the larger issue, and this is new information, that could come under the emergency and expedite the process.

**Bobzien:** I know the provision of NEPA that you are talking about, but these are areas that we have no NEPA done.

**Kile:** In the alternative arrangements, you mentioned an exempting process, would that include Tribal consultation?

**Bobzien:** No it would not because CEQ only has authority under their regulations, so they don't have section 106 consultation regulations, etc. Tribal consultation remains the same. In our interactions with Tribes, dealing with issues with some sense of urgency, all entities have been responsive to our needs. While our time lines still apply, we do ask for some expedited considerations.

**Kile:** The Tribal Nations responded to your request? Was that through face to face consultation, or letter?

**Bobzien:** Most of it is done by letter, because we have such a large group.

**Vonk:** Just to clarify, did you say that there is no update about whether there will be alternative options offered?

**Bobzien:** Our chief has requested it, but I can't say if we'll be granted the alternative arrangements or not.

**Vonk:** Does it help to have the rest of the delegation, in South Dakota and Wyoming, and our new representative in South Dakota write a letter of support for the request?

**Bobzien:** My assessment is that they are already engaged, the door is open and walked through. I don't know how they work inside of that but it is going forward for their consideration. The letter from Herseth Sandlin is being honored.

**Smith:** If you really have their attention, that is fine, but if not, sometimes repeated urgings are often needed. Any of us could help if you want us to, but if you think we are ok, then we are ok.

**Martley:** To confirm what is being said, the rules under which CEQ will grant an emergency are pretty cut and dry, I don't think advocacy would change the outcome very much.

### **Regular Agenda**

#### **Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Act**

**Bobzien:** I would like the Board to listen to the Subcommittees proposal and ask the Board to act on the proposal. When CFLRP was initiated in early 2010, it was winnowed down to July, August, and September. The Board was reappointed the beginning of this year, with the anticipation that this would be acted on very early this year. We want to be first in line. Just recently we learned that they are not going to act on these till next spring. The subcommittee work is ready to go, but if they change the rules for the application, then we would be adjusting or amending the application, and we would bring it back to the Board for approval.

**Mayes:** We are asking for a grant that will help the Forest be healthier; help the communities and the work force. We are working with the concept that the Black Hills is an island in the plains. We would like to restore the forest to the way it was a 100 years ago; the canopy would be spaced so that the trees can battle the bugs. We are after the best biological health of the forest.

We want to do watershed restoration of about two miles of streambed. Restoration Thinning of about 1,000 acres (most of the timber we'll cut & chunk), and 150 acres of invasive plant treatments.

The four areas that have been targeted for this work include Greater Rushmore area, Greater Battle Creek watershed, Black Hills WyoDak area, and Rattlesnake area.

The total request for this first fiscal year is \$575,000, annual requests after that will be for \$2,000,000 each year. This is add on money to the already existing work on the Black Hills.

We have an impressive list of Collaborators. There is a lot of interest from groups who understand how we need to manage the Forest.

We are hoping to harvest timber, by doing so, putting more timber into the industry. Something that Colorado would pay gold for. We want to keep it robust. If the cellulosic fuel deal comes through, instead of burning the slash piles we'll be able to use them for fuel. From a small seed, the plan we have will really affect the bottom line here on the Forest. Financially if we are able to do this, the cost savings annually would be \$3 million a year from wildfire suppression alone. It will take the support of the entire Board to move this forward, we believe this is really a way to benefit the Forest, and we would like your support.

**Scherrer:** Would you walk us through the whole process; assuming we vote to approve, walk us through where it goes, who signs it, etc., including the timeline?

**Lanier:** As Craig said we thought this was going to happen a lot sooner. The Washington Office (WO) was going to ask us for proposals soon, but now they aren't going to ask us till February or March. The WO will ask for proposals, they will tell us what we will have to address, when they do that we'll submit our proposal. The National Committee will meet in June to decide on the proposals. If we get selected, they will notify us by August or September. We would have to do the work by September 30, 2011.

**Blair:** Under the collaboration paragraphs, and a little spin off of Jim's comments, we have a bunch of groups from Forest Service to Tribes, to Department of Agriculture, etc. involved in this. Will there be an administrative arm that will oversee all these? I don't want to see the half million dollars, this year and one million dollars next year, eaten up by administrative costs. The majority of the money needs to go to boots on the ground.

**Lanier:** That is our intent, for the money to go to boots on the ground. If you're talking about building contracts or things like that, there would be a cost, and if you recall the rules of this are that it is spent on National Forest, and it will be matched by other money and what other people are spending.

**Mayes:** For clarification, some of the other organizations that are noted have given money and some only support. We are listing them in the executive summary because it enhances our presentation and gives it local interest. I think they would be more than happy if we do the administrative work.

**Jaeger:** We did this proposal last year, and it went to the Board but it did not get through the final cut. We made some adjustments, and this one has follow on years. Where does the money go? The money comes straight to the Forest; the concern is that when you deal with fiscal years, the end of September is the cutoff date for spending the money; this is why our proposal is lower the first year. This isn't the only work we'll be doing this will just supplement it. This money will go to contracts and boots on the ground. Most of the admin costs are already covered in our base program. This is in addition to our base program, and allows us to do more.

**Tieszen:** Why were those four specific areas selected for areas to do the work?

**Mayes:** We already have NEPA done in those areas. These areas fit with other areas that we want to protect; State areas, both SD & WY. It fits ongoing programs, fire suppression, and helps us be a good neighbor.

**Brannan:** If we've done a 67% departure from history, where are we now and where are we planning to go?

**Bobzien:** The 67% departure is forest wide. We would have to do analysis on each area. Desired condition vs. current condition; it is all to have a more diverse forest which would increase the amount of hardwood, and reduce the bark beetle and wildfire potential. This is all in line with our Forest plan, if you want this, we can get it to you.

**Brannan:** It's hard to stay in step if you don't have anything to compare it to.

**Bobzien:** We will get the information to you.

**Vonk:** On page two of the Executive Summary, under collaboration, you say Division of GF&P, that should read Department of Game, Fish & Parks.

**Hoyt:** Is \$2 million the maximum amount that can be requested, and if not, shouldn't this proposal be front loaded?

**Lanier:** We don't know what the maximum is yet for this year, but last year it was \$4 million per project. We came up with \$2 million feeling like it is what the Forest could handle right now.

**Mayes:** In our discussions, we were concerned that we would overbite, and we didn't want to ask for something we couldn't use. We know we can spend \$2 million adequately.

**Blair:** I would move the adoption of the recommendation as proposed by the Subcommittee.

**Heinert:** We have a motion to adopt the proposal, is there a second?

**Rowe:** I second.

**Heinert:** Any discussion?

**Smith:** I've tried to look at substance here, and I know this is an executive summary, but hopefully it will accurately reflect the whole report. I see errors and omissions.

[Amendments as proposed by Smith & Vonk shown in red in the Executive Summary below.]

## Black Hills Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Project (BHCFLRP) Executive Summary

The Black Hills National Forest and its partners continue to do all we can to restore the Ponderosa Pine to a more resilient condition that will better withstand large scale disturbances like insect epidemics and enormous severe and intense fires. Applying for Collaborative Landscape Forest Restoration Program funds would allow us to do even more to restore the Ponderosa Pine forests in South Dakota and Wyoming.

### 1. Proposed Treatments

Setting: The Black Hills of South Dakota and Wyoming are known as "the Forest" of South Dakota and Great Plains. It's National, regional, and local importance has been cited by many politicians, visitors, and residents. It is a forested "Island in the Plains" revered by Indian tribes and treasured by visitors for its beauty and National **treasures** (Mount Rushmore **National Memorial**, and Crazy Horse **Mountain**.) This area is home to many small communities and numerous enclaves of homes. The public and private forests are working forests providing valuable public benefits, including critical wildlife habitat, magnificent hunting and sight-seeing opportunities, biodiversity, **abundant** clean water, wood products, **livestock grazing**, superb recreational access and opportunities, and other ecosystem services (such as carbon sequestration.) These benefits support rural jobs and economies and a high quality of life. There have been approximately five fire cycles (frequent low severity fires approximately every 14 years) missed due to suppression and other management activities in the Black Hills. The result is a forest that is uncharacteristic compared to historical conditions seen by the Custer Expedition (generally greater than 67% departure from historical conditions.) Significant restoration is needed to bring the Forest back to more open-grown conditions which will reduce the ecological, social, and economic risks associated with uncharacteristic fire severity, intensity and sizes.

By investing in a small portion of this landscape, there is an opportunity to return most of the landscape to a highly functioning condition. The Forest Service is uniquely positioned to continue restoration work across the forest because this area sustains a resilient timber industry which makes these restoration efforts economically and socially viable, while sustaining local communities.

Treatments: The following treatments can be accomplished with the requested funding. Priority locations, as identified by the National Forest Advisory Board include Greater Rushmore area, Greater Battle Creek watershed, Black Hills WyoDak area, and Rattlesnake area, based upon available funding. All of these activities are covered by completed analysis and decision documents (NEPA.)

Watershed Restoration (Trail/ Stream Rehabilitation) 2 Miles

Restoration Thinning 1000 Acres

Invasive Plant Treatments (biological control) 150 Acres

Total \$ Request for 2011 approx. \$575,000(1)

Annual \$ Requests for years 2012 – 2019 each year \$2,000,000(2)

Treatments will be strategically placed to complement existing treatments, address WUI and other high values-at-risk, and ongoing and predicted insect infestations. Treatments will also be prioritized to complement restoration work that is occurring on adjacent state, private, and other Federal lands where cost effectiveness can be maximized by combining treatments and leveraging partnership dollars. Treatments will include timber harvest, cut and chunk(3) green mountain pine beetle-infested trees, biological control of invasive plant species, prescribed burning, and rehabilitating roads and trails.

## 2. Ecological Context (Social & Economic)

The majority (95%) of the Black Hills forests has a ponderosa pine cover type. Other cover types include: meadow/grass (1%), hardwoods (2%), white spruce (<1%), shrubs (<1%), and non-vegetated areas (<1%) which are large granite rock outcrops, limestone plateau, and lakes. Riparian vegetation areas also occur, but as inclusions within other cover types. Each of these cover types and structures provide habitat for a wide array of wildlife species.

Silvicultural practices will generally open up ponderosa pine stands, improving their vigor and resistance to beetle attack and crown-killing wildfire. Stand conditions will move away from fire condition class II towards natural disturbance processes and cycles characteristic of condition class I. In such conditions, prescribed fire can be readily used as a frequent tool to meet management objectives.



### 3. Collaboration

Partners collaborating on this project include the National Forest Advisory Board, National Park Service, Custer State Park, South Dakota Department of Agriculture, State of Wyoming, Norbeck Society, Black Hills Forest Resource Association, local elected officials, and others. The National Wild Turkey Federation and the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation are interested and very active partners.

The CFLRP was developed and approved by the Black Hills National Forest Advisory Board (NFAB) on November 17, 2010.

In addition, Phase II Amendment to the 1997 Revised Forest Plan, the backbone of the Black Hill's restoration strategy, had significant collaboration in its development including: Seven counties in South Dakota and Wyoming, Tribal consultation with 12 tribes including the Lakota (Sioux), Cheyenne, Shoshoni, Crow, and South Dakota Department of Agriculture and the Department of Game, Fish & Parks and the Wyoming Game & Fish Department, Wyoming Wildlife & Natural Resource Trust, and Wyoming State Forestry Division.

Multi-party monitoring would include direct involvement of the Advisory Board, interested agencies, and the public in inventory, monitoring, and evaluation related to project implementation, including the Black Hills Collaborative Forest Restoration projects.

### 4. Wildfire

Fire has played a significant role in the ecology of the Black Hills(4). Dendrochronology studies show mean fire-return intervals ranging from 10 to 30 years. If fires had been allowed to burn instead of pursuing an aggressive fire suppression program over the last 75 to 120 years, significantly more acres would have burned at a more frequent interval and a lower intensity. Today's conditions favor wildfires of increased fire intensity. Treatments would reduce stand density and canopy closure bringing the forest back to a more historical open-grown condition. Fire behavior characteristics would be mixed severity as opposed to those areas not treated which would experience more high severity to stand replacement fire behavior. The chances for successful initial attack would increase and the potential damage to identified values at risk would decrease. Projects on adjacent lands combined with the treatments proposed would decrease the hazardous fuels much more efficiently for longer periods of time, thus allowing more opportunity for a natural fire regime to occur and be sustained.

Wildfire has burned 186,000 acres in the Black Hills in the last decade, the largest being the Jasper Fire that consumed 83,000 acres in four days. The explosive fire runs made in the largest fires consumed private homes and structures and caused the evacuation of Deadwood, SD, a significant tourist destination. Emergency suppression costs in the six hottest fire seasons averaged about \$6 million annually. It is estimated that proper restoration treatments

will reduce that amount by an estimated \$3 million annually, by creating a fuel profile and fuel breaks conducive to ground fire. A large-scale, high-intensity wildfire in key areas such as the Greater Rushmore Area puts many more structures and significant national landmarks at great risk (see WUI Map). Other important values at risk include: Firefighter and public health and safety, national monuments, fish and wildlife habitat, soil productivity, clean air, abundant clean water, livestock grazing, wood products, and functional fire-adapted ecosystems. Some of these values, including area resorts, are also threatened by the secondary effects, such as landslides, soil erosion, and the spread of invasive species. Due to the projected high level of surface fuel loading (40–60 tons/acre) as a result of the current mountain pine beetle outbreaks, these fires could be quite severe.

## 5. Utilization

In the first year of this proposal, limited opportunities for utilization of by-products will be available due to the timing of funding availability. Thereafter, these projects will produce 48,000 ccf of sawtimber that normally will be shipped to sawmills in Hill City or Spearfish (SD), or Hulet (WY) or several other smaller sawmills. Byproducts from those mills are used for heating pellets (Spearfish Forest Products), are hauled to Dakota Panel (OSB/particle board) in Rapid City, or are shipped via train to Longview, WA for pulp.

These projects will also produce 11,800 ccf of small-diameter material (products-other-than-logs; POL) available for a growing post/pole market in the Black Hills. The estimated value of sawtimber and POL for this project using a decade average stumpage value (since 2009 and 2010 are not representative years) is \$5 million.

One of the most significant actions to be done in a restoration program on the Black Hills would be utilization of an estimated 1,600 piles annually. Producers would reduce their costs and the environmental effects of pile burning and rehabilitation would be considerably reduced, particularly if this material was used in lieu of natural gas or other less renewable natural resources. Interest in using this biomass seems to be increasing, as the Forest Service continues to explore options to help these ventures be successful and to reduce the environmental footprint of the by-products of restoration forestry activities.

## 6. Benefits to Local Communities

Western South Dakota and northeastern Wyoming rural communities in and around the “Island in the Plains” Black Hills Forest are dependent on multiple use managed public lands and the resource extraction that restoration activities support. While tourism is a large part of the economy and jobs of the area, the natural resource jobs are often the better paying jobs and provide a large part of the communities’ identities and culture. Not only does the forest products industry support a way of life, it provides the National Forest, National Parks, State Park, and private individuals with economical alternatives to complete restoration activities.

Without this resilient industry, significantly less restoration activities could be afforded in the Black Hills.

#### 7. Funding

Required tables will be provided in final submission document – this is covered in #1 above.

#### 8. Landscape Strategy

A Landscape Restoration Strategy for the Black Hills National Forest – an Island in the Plains was completed May 2010 and is available on <http://www.fs.usda.gov/blackhills>.

END

**Heinert:** Would the changes that Nels proposed be consistent with the plan, can we all agree that the changes are acceptable?

**Kile:** I do not agree with the changes. As a member of the Subcommittee, this is different than what I believe the Subcommittee decided on. [There were no interests that got left out of the plan, I think it is complete.](#)

**Martley:** I would like to ask Nancy how the proposed new language differs from what the intent of the original proposal is.

**Kile:** I understood it to be helpful with regard to the esthetics of wildlife, and I have a hard time just continually rubber stamping timber and grazing, so that is where I depart from it. I think it is covered in there, and I don't see why we need to reiterate it.

**Rowe:** As I read through the sections that Nels offers the changes, adding adjectives or a narrative phrase that is already mentioned. I feel confident that the product the Subcommittee brought forward is a perfect product. Our forest will benefit, the timber will benefit, and the grazing will benefit.

**Vonk:** I support all of the changes, it is always important to point out the importance of abundant clean water. I fully support the change of exotic to invasive species. And the last one, I am less passionate about, but I support the changes.

**Brannan:** The last one, the clarification on multi use public land is important, because the way it is stated here includes state land, and I like the change.

**Kile:** To add to the change, where we are talking about abundant good clean water, let's add basic human rights. [If we are going to continually reiterate cows and timber, we need to reiterate "basic human rights" which means traditionalists access to indigenous foods and medicines. Esthetics that get degraded when cows chew up the foliage and timber machinery masticates the naturalized relationships of plants that provide food and medicine, considered gifts for people from He Sapa.](#)

**Heinert:** We will offer Nancy's comments as an amendment to the amendment. Do we have a second to the amendment?

**Martley:** I'll second the amendment for the purpose of continuing the conversation.

**Heinert:** Nels, could you agree to that addition to your amendment and second the amendment?

**Smith:** Reluctantly, I have to acknowledge these are administrative function distinctions, to make sure the Forest Service honors certain public law, so no, I would not agree to the addition to the amendment.

**Martley:** As we are getting into these details we are getting further and further away from the project of "Landscape Restoration". After seconding the amendment, I just don't see how human rights or grazing are a part of landscape restoration proposal. I would speak against both the human rights, and grazing amendments. Singling out livestock grazing was counter to comments made in Terry Mayes' presentation, where he discussed restoration and buffering of stream banks affected by livestock grazing. There are Board members who are not comfortable with highlighting only the positive benefits of livestock grazing in collaborative landscape restoration, when in fact it has created a need for landscape restoration.

**Heinert:** If there is no further comment, all in favor say aye, opposed nay; the amendment to the amendment fails.

**Heinert:** Now, back to the question of the original amendment.

**Hoyt:** I would like to call the question on the amendment.

**Heinert:** If there are no further objections, all those in favor say aye, opposed same sign. Ayes have it, motion passed.

**Heinert:** Now we are back to the plan as amended. Is there any further discussion on the plan as amended? Comments, questions?

**Kohlbrand:** With the change of the time schedule, will that change the priorities of what you would want to do? Does it mess up the time schedule of the activities, or did you plan for September?

**Lanier:** We talked about the time schedule, when we talked about the three areas, and why we didn't add a bunch of other items.

**Heinert:** Further comments or questions? All in favor of the proposal as amended say aye, opposed, same sign, motion carried, (not unanimously).

## **Bark Beetle Conservation Coalition**

**Bobzien:** A lot of our discussion is related to the bark beetle condition in the Black Hills, this is the 13<sup>th</sup> year of the epidemic. I was really struck by some of the counties that came to the BHNF and said “we would like to help”, and ask what else they could do. Lawrence County was the first to step up. They thought they could help us with aerial photos and other things. This caused us to say that with this kind of cooperation, the people working together; the BLM, Conservation Districts, County Commissioners, and other leaders, with a common purpose, we could do more.

We looked at our resources, and decided we are doing all we can do alone, but can we work together and do even more. This spawned a need call to the conservation leaders. We had 41 people from other entities attend our first meeting, and the second meeting was substantial as well. How the different counties formed and joined resources within their respective governments, etc. was impressive. With that back drop, Tina helped work through this, as did Randy Spiering. We asked Coe Foss, and Bill Kohlbrand to speak about how they have begun to implement their plans.

**Coe Foss:** We are working with the weed and pest boards in Custer, Pennington and Lawrence counties. This whole group agreed on a single sheet of information regarding the pine beetles, all the agencies together came up with this sheet, which I feel is impressive.

We started out with a reimbursement agreement, and it evolved into a grant, and it is in the signature phase right now. Description of the grant and how it will work in South Dakota: The amount of the grant is \$170,000. We will set up a voucher system with private landowners to cover some of the cost of removing green infested trees. Payments will be made on a first come first served basis. Priority for reimbursement will be given to private landowners with property adjacent to BHNF land. Payment will be \$14.00 per tree for cutting and chunking, \$18.00 if they hire a contractor. 50% of the cost for trees cut and hauled to a sawmill for processing, maximum of \$10,000 per landowner. We will not reimburse for any red needle trees. Cutting and chunking will need to be done by March 1, 2011. We’ll allow cutting and hauling to mills up to June 15, 2011.

The Weed & Pest boards have agreed to help by giving us their GPS locations of trees they mark, along with the names and numbers of the private landowners.

Current status: Nearly 3,000 acres of trees marked, found 21,000 infested trees. If anyone wants their trees marked, let us know. 10 new requests for making were received from the meeting at Crazy Horse last Saturday. Ray Sowers has hired three different consulting foresters, and Joe Lowe has a crew of 15 Native Americans out of Pine Ridge being trained to mark bark beetle infested trees.

**Scherrer:** The program for marking is ongoing, but is the money spent?

**Foss:** The money has not been spent, as soon as the agreement is signed, we will contact the land owners whose property we've already marked. A letter with the rules and the forms will be sent to each person.

**Carroll:** Are you asking if marking is dependent on the agreement? The State will mark the bug trees at any time, even before the agreement is in place.

**Blair:** Once they are marked and some are on the ground, is it part of the program that they have to haul them out, because the bugs won't die just by cutting down the tree.

**Foss:** Our preferred treatment is to have them hauled out. If they get them on the ground now, our experience is, we get 80 to 85 % kill of the beetles on the ground. That's with the tree cut into two foot chunks.

**Blair:** You mentioned that you are teaching the Pine Ridge folks to mark trees, would these trees qualify for firewood for the reservations?

**Foss:** That could be problematic because we had a problem that with another beetle; the Ips beetle, several loads of infested wood was hauled to the reservation, the beetles emerged, and got into trees. I wouldn't want to send infested trees. Full length logs will not dry out enough. I would hate to get an infestation on either reservation.

**Kile:** Are the records of which landowners sign up a public record?

**Coe:** I would assume so, but I don't know, I keep a list of the landowners. The 3,000 acres is about triple what we've done in the past. Last year we averaged 2 ½ infested trees per acre, this year we are at about nine infested trees per acre.

**Blair:** The money that has been provided, is that coming from a different fund?

**Bobzien:** It was a decision I made to use the money from our out year planning account. There were counties and other jurisdictions that wanted to move forward with this right away, we took funds that we were going to use for out year planning. My thinking was pretty simple, if we only do out year planning, we'll only be planning for a dead forest, but by acting early, we'll have a green forest.

**Heinert:** Any more comments?

**Foss:** Thank you Craig.

**Kohlbrand:** On the Wyoming side, I would like to thank Craig for coming up with some money; because it is money we lack to put work on the ground. In Wyoming, we are on the front line of things. We are getting aggressive on the small patches, doing direct control, thinning and logging is the best long term solution. Some of the ground on the border is steep.

We have funds money and we are concentrating our effort on these areas that have bugs. We took out \$20,000 from State & Private to do direct control, cost share thinning, etc. The answer really is with management and chainsaw work. We are getting \$30,000 from the Forest Service and we are keying in on direct control of the trees in the steep ground. We are relying on the small contractors, and it is a challenge. We are doing the cutting and chunking. Prior to that with our inmate crews, we did a lot of peeling, but we are starting to get enough bugs, and it will get away from us if we're not aggressive.

We are paying people 100% of the cost in the rough ground, but if the trees are easily accessible, they don't get money for that. We will try to use the money as best we can. We are trying to avoid the time of having the landowners showing their share with receipts etc., we just want to have them get to work. We are also doing some landowner workshops, etc. We are finding that people really don't know how to identify the bark beetle. We're hitting it real hard on the state line. We are spotting trees at Inyan Kara right now that is surrounded by private land. It will help both the Forest and the State. Steve has been great to work with. We have a great relationship with the National Forest, and we appreciate the money.

Our timber sale program, we've keyed our program to areas with small bug infestations. Where we could do direct control we did that to buy time till we could put up a timber sale. We were using inmate crews on State and Federal land, but not private land. In the future I would really like to see us form some task forces, through Weed and Pest or something to avoid some of the burden if we get set up ahead of time.

**Heinert:** Are there any questions? Thank you Coe and Bill.

**Bobzien:** Closing comment, Coe & Bill have been doing this for years; we have really found a lot of new partners. In terms of this first year of agreements, this is just a start. We've been observing the private workshops that have been occurring, outreach for Tribal members; this is really just seed money. Coe and Bill thank you both, great job.

### **Rocky Mountain Research Station Goshawk & Research in our back yard – Russ Graham & Terrie Jain**

**Bobzien:** Our next topic is about research that is going on in the Experimental Forest. Some of you have met our Scientists at the NFAB meeting held up at the Boxelder Job Corps. First I would like to welcome Dr. Russ Graham, who grew up in Sundance, spent his career with the USFS, in many functions. We are honored to have Russ to present to us here today. And Dr. Terrie Jain, really we've adopted Terrie. She spent the summer in Nemo – and came home scratching her head about these changing forests. We are honored to have Terrie here today. We rely on Russ and Terrie to help provide us application and science.

This is an info topic, what they will provide to us they have shared with our employees.

### Discussion on Goshawk Research Presentation

**Graham:** The Goshawk can make a living in a lot of different areas. It is a multi scale species. The Goshawk family needs 500 pounds of stuff to kill every year, that is for two adults, and two kids. They kill mammals and birds.

**Brannan:** Why does the Forest Service not allow thinning when they find a Goshawk? You would think active management would help.

**Graham:** As a scientist, we supply the Forest with information, and I would suggest that the Forest make those decisions on an interdisciplinary method, that is the decision making process that the Forest Service uses is an integrated process.

**Jain:** We are working on a Goshawk assessment. The Forest is trying to get more information on the Goshawk on the Forest to help them make the decisions.

**Kohlbrand:** Are the Goshawks in general increasing or decreasing?

**Graham:** We control the habitat, and we don't control the populations, we will have an assessment of the Goshawk habitat done by next October.

**Smith:** Your reference toward stand diversity comes with the elimination of latter fuels.

**Jain:** I was talking about spatial diversity; there is a difference between spatial and vertical. Vertical is the different size of trees all stacked on top of each other. Spatial diversity is having groups of trees together, small in one group, medium in another, etc.

**Bobzien:** Every site where Goshawks occupy is different. We have a forest standard that is back to meeting our parameters of the Goshawk, and that is to do management that benefits the species. Past science said that doing nothing is the best for the goshawk. The one we are working on now is calling for some irregular managements in the stand, but there is not a once size fits all. The science is evolving, and we are applying it accordingly.

**Kozel:** It's an interdisciplinary process, you have to be willing to have different discipline out there and talk and treat Goshawks for current situations, and future situations. We are working with the Wildlife Biologist on Goshawks in the Stateline area. Each stand is different, and each disturbance is different.

**Graham:** And for each Goshawk, you must remember the three areas, the nest stand, the post fledgling family area, and the grocery store that all have a different set of management issues. It depends on what part you are in, and what you want to accomplish.



**Blair:** I've seen one goshawk in the Black Hills in the 50 years I've been hunting here. We have an area of the hills we call Norbeck, that was set aside for birds and animals, we seem to be at odds with each other, if we have a Goshawk that has difficulty being sustained in different parts of the Hills, yet we don't go in and manage that, and now we have the portions of Norbeck that will go away.

**Graham:** On the east side of the Cascades, they created spotted owl habitat by suppressing fire. Now we have an area we need to protect because of the endangered species. Our management actions sometimes conflict with the best practices of the forest. There's more than one of those examples.

**Kohlbrand:** We worked with Wyoming Game & Fish, and we used their recommendations. We had pine beetles that forced us into a situation. We had Goshawks that stayed all summer, and they rotate nests. What kind of time period is going to tell me if we did well or not?

**Graham:** I've been studying them since 1990, and I finally got to see them. I don't know the time frame. On the north rim of the Grand Canyon, the Goshawk will disappear, and 15 years later another one comes back. They are a secretive bird. Just because you haven't seen them doesn't mean they are not there.

**Kile:** What is the size of the Experimental Forest?

**Jain:** 3,500 acres.

**Kile:** Is the Experimental Forest under the Black Hills National Forest or some other agency?

**Jain:** It's a partnership between research and the Black Hills; under the US Forest Service.

**Jaeger:** Research operates independently to give research to the National Forest – they are in a separate organization.

**Jain:** The Experimental Forest allows us to implement what we think needs to be done. The NFS has the authority to do NEPA and the timber sale. But we dictate what gets cut and what stays; this forces science and management to work together.

**Graham:** My philosophy is that when there is a management issue, I'm going to do as much experimentation as possible. The Experimental Forest, we have management issues for that forest, but address it with a research questions. Terrie says minimum three times, she would prefer five times.

**Engleskirger:** Thanks for coming out and doing work in the Black Hills, no one wants to see the Goshawk disappear. Is there any potential for future research to look at Goshawk nest sites, and do a report on that in the future?

**Graham:** This is my best as a Goshawk scientist, we'll be able to show you our best interpretation, it's only about 3200 acres which is about half of the space of a goshawks territory.

**Engleskirger:** You're talking about the full 5,600 acres. I'm thinking about where we have 180 acres laid out or a small area like that.

**Jain:** We'll do the whole 3,500 acres. We've taken plats where every tree is mapped. We'll show those, and quantify that, and then bounce those back to the Goshawk assessment, and see if they fit. We can also look at the trade offs in the process. On the Black Hills, the Experimental Forest will be reflective of the PFA and some of those areas.

**Graham:** The beetle is eating us out or house and home. We want to protect the area in a scientific way.

**Engleskirger:** 60 BA group selection, is that something that is feasible?

**Jain:** It is beautifully feasible. One of the things – I depend on the National Forest to do my job, because people are used to marking spacing, but we used vigor for the primary spacing. It turned out to be 60 BA, we put on 10 square feet of volume every 10 years.

**Carroll:** You say “if” the beetles are going to eat us, they are going to eat us at 100 – 110 basil area.

**Jain:** you want to drop it into the 60s but provide growing space to reach 80 or 90 to allow the trees time to grow. You have to allow that time. I've learned that it is the ideal forest in terms of volume control. You have to control that density. Dropping it to 60 and then taking it up to 80.

**Engleskirger:** 80 to 90 is where you want to be ideally, but a group might be 100 – the average is 60.

**Heinert:** Thank you Mr. Graham, and Mrs. Jain. We appreciate that this quality of work is going on right in our back yard.

**Carroll:** We've taken extensive aerial photography in late September and October of the Experimental Forest. They are on forestphot.com. You are surrounded by insects. What's been the experience inside the Experimental Forest?

**Jain:** Group selection; create groups, the beetles are creating groups and the forest is getting eaten alive. The squid Timber Sale is a result of that, trying to get ahead. 20 year cycle, you have to be active on the management of the trees here, they grow fast, and there is a limit in the amount of biomass the Forest can hold. This is an active forest, and it grows fast, and once it gets dense, the beetles come in. The beetles are happening; you have to be on top of the management.

## **Public Comments**

**Chairman Heinert:** We'll close out discussion on the regular agenda items. If anyone from the public wishes to address the Board, please do so.

There are no comments from the public.

**Kile:** I have a comment about a piece of the Black Hills National Forest website it's with regard to special places on the BHNF. We've talked about landscape restoration, when I talk to my elders and my constituents, one Elder said "I wish they would consider us as wildlife, and we might get the same respect", another Elder said, "When are they going to give it back?"

I would like to have some restoration and trust with the Forest Service with how they are dealing with the "Special Places", and the American Indians.

On that web page it says, "American Indian sites". I would like that to say "American Indian Sacred Sites".

Further down, in the section about Harney Peak, my people don't refer to the holy man as shaman. The word "holy man" would be preferred, specifically in reference to the Black Elk Wilderness.

**Jaeger:** We will be hosting Tribal consultation on the planning rule, here in Rapid City at the visitor center. Invitations will be sent out. We have an outstanding facilitator for the event, Ms. Suzanne Martley. We had one other meeting on the Planning Rule here in Rapid City, and the Board was involved with that public meeting.

**Heinert:** Our next meeting will be on Wednesday, January 5, 2011, same time same station.

At this time (3:52) I will declare the meeting adjourned.

## **2011 Meeting Dates:**

January 5, 2011

February 16

March 16

April 20

May 18

June 15

July – No Meeting

August 17 – Field Trip

September 21

October 19

November 16 – Recognition Luncheon